

N National Centre
for Writing

October 2025 –
February 2026

WHAT'S ON

The Old Library
Wood, Norwich

Welcome!

Autumn strides into view, and though the nights may be drawing in, we're ready to light up the season with highlights and starry moments to guide us through the darker months ahead...

Gather close as we share a rich programme of voices, perspectives, and provocations this storytelling season. Look out for Sulaiman Addonia at Counterpoints Arts' Platforma Festival (p.3), which brings together arts organisations working with migrants, refugees, and people with lived experience of forced migration. We're also delighted to welcome the Norwich Book Festival back to Dragon Hall this October, featuring Sarah Hall, Celeste Mohammed, and more (p.5). And early next year, under the microscope of the Norwich Science Festival, we'll explore impossible questions, immortality, and other wonders (p.8).

We're embracing the season's spirit with plenty of thrills and chills for Hallowe'en: from *Ghost Stories by Candlelight* (p.4), to new horror-inspired writing resources (p.23), including a free online course where young people can learn to craft their own scary stories. Then it's on to festive cheer, with fireside folk tales (p.6) and the return of the City of Literature Christmas Market (p.7) — the place to be for all your bookish needs!

As always, this little introduction can only hint at what's ahead. So dive in, explore, and we look forward to seeing you, somewhere, perhaps several times! Soon...

Warmest wishes,

Peggy Hughes

CEO, National Centre for Writing

© ANDI SAPEY

© ALEXANDER MEEUS



Sulaiman Addonia

Platforma Festival

The eighth Platforma festival is taking place across the East of England in October, bringing together arts organisations working with migrants, refugees and those who have experienced forced migration.

Words of Welcome with Marjorie Lotfi & George Szirtes

**MON 6 OCTOBER, 6PM, GREAT
YARMOUTH LIBRARY, FREE**

Award-winning poets Marjorie Lotfi and George Szirtes offer readings and reflections on the theme of sanctuary in poetry. This special event marks the culmination of Words of Welcome, a multilingual poetry exchange in Norfolk libraries. Download a copy of the *Words of Welcome* poetry anthology below.



Delivered by Norfolk Library
and Information Service
with Creative Arts East and
National Centre for Writing

Hearts, Bodies & Words: Migration Stories with Sulaiman Addonia

**SAT 11 OCTOBER, 6PM, NATIONAL CENTRE
FOR WRITING, PAY WHAT YOU WISH**

A fascinating in-conversation event about writing the refugee experience with Eritrean-Ethiopian-British novelist Sulaiman Addonia. Addonia will reflect on intimacy and agency in narratives of migration, the healing power of art, and how writing has shaped his own journey. Suitable for ages 18+.

In partnership with Flanders Literature's
Flip through Flanders programme, in
association with Modern Culture

platforma



Dragon Hall Social

**WED 8 OCTOBER, WED 12 NOVEMBER,
WED 10 DECEMBER, WED 4 FEBRUARY,
DOORS 5.30PM, NATIONAL CENTRE
FOR WRITING, FREE & DROP-IN**

Open to anyone who makes, reads or works with words, our monthly drop-in social is an opportunity to grab a drink, meet people, cook up plans and compare notes, to talk books, and to hear what's happening in Norwich.

Beyond the Page: An Evening of Live Poetry

**THU 9 OCTOBER, 6.30PM,
NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING,
PAY WHAT YOU WISH**

An evening of live readings from some of the most compelling voices in contemporary poetry. In the lead-up to the Poetry in Aldeburgh Festival (6–9 November), this special showcase brings together Ramona Herdman, James McDermott, Jenny Pagdin, and Julia Webb for an unforgettable night of performance and poetry.

In partnership with Poetry in Aldeburgh

Even More...Ghost Stories by Candlelight

**FRI 17 OCTOBER, 7.30PM, NATIONAL
CENTRE FOR WRITING, £14 (£12 CONC)**

After last year's sell-out success, *Ghost Stories by Candlelight* returns to Dragon Hall with four brand-new tales from award-winning writers. Step into the shadowy corners of the East and West of England. Gather with us by candlelight, just don't let the light go out... For ages 12+.

*A HighTide and Pentabus co-production,
in association with Harlow Playhouse*

On Tour with Bad Betty Press

**TUE 4 NOVEMBER, 7PM, NATIONAL CENTRE
FOR WRITING, PAY WHAT YOU WISH**

Join Bad Betty Press for a night of dynamic poetry and music, showcasing world-class artists and local favourites in a warm and inclusive setting. Featuring performances from Desree, Hasti, Ashley Hickson-Lovence and Kareem Parkins-Brown. This popular night is a sure sell out so grab your tickets quickly!

Norwich Book Festival at Dragon Hall

The celebration of stories is back! We are delighted to partner with the Festival on a weekend of events at our home, Dragon Hall.

**NORWICH
BOOK
FESTIVAL**

Bog People: Unearthing Folk Horror

**SAT 25 OCTOBER, 4.30PM, NATIONAL
CENTRE FOR WRITING, £12**

Uncanny and unsettling, wild and wyrd... join A.K. Blakemore and Salena Godden for a conversation about the eerie allure of folk tales as they dive into *Bog People*, a new anthology of folk horror that celebrates British working-class culture and history.

Helm: Sarah Hall

**SAT 25 OCTOBER, 7.30PM, NATIONAL
CENTRE FOR WRITING, £12**

Rich, wild, and vital, *Helm* is the story of a singular life force – and of the bond between people and nature. Join its award-winning author, Sarah Hall, in conversation with Sarah Perry as they explore storytelling, myth, and memory.



House of Splinters: Ghost Stories with Laura Purcell

**SUN 26 OCTOBER, 12NOON, NATIONAL
CENTRE FOR WRITING, £12**

Step into the shadows with the master of the modern gothic, Laura Purcell, as she returns to the ghostly world of *The Silent Companions* in her chilling new novel, *House of Splinters*.

Family and Folklore: Mysticism in West African and Caribbean Stories

**SUN 26 OCTOBER, 3PM, NATIONAL
CENTRE FOR WRITING, £12**

Celeste Mohammed is joined by Ayanna Lloyd-Banwo to explore belonging, resistance, and legacy in her new novel – and how West African and Caribbean folklore and history has shaped their storytelling.

Donuts, Robots & Awesome Comics with Neill Cameron

**MON 27 OCTOBER, 11AM, NATIONAL
CENTRE FOR WRITING, £7 PER CHILD**

Join award-winning writer and cartoonist Neill Cameron for a fun, interactive session all about storytelling, drawing, and unleashing your imagination! Perfect for ages 7+.

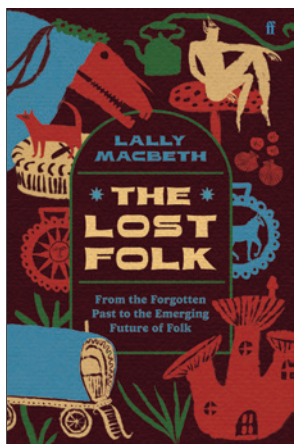
Norwich Book Festival is presented by The Forum alongside key partners National Centre for Writing, Norfolk Libraries, and University of East Anglia



Antosh Wojcik

Burnt TOAST

THU 27 NOVEMBER, 6.30PM, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING, PAY WHAT YOU WISH
Burnt TOAST is poetry, but not as you know it! Join our host, Lewis Buxton, and an exciting line-up of national and local artists for an evening of poetry, spoken word, live performance and an open mic. Featuring Nina Mingya Powles and Antosh Wojcik.

**The Lost Folk with Lally MacBeth**

THU 4 DECEMBER, 6.30PM, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING, £10 (£8 CONC)
Gather with us this festive season for an evening of storytelling and music. Through Lally MacBeth's new book, we'll explore the forgotten past and emerging future of British folklore. Discover the customs, communities, and characters that weave together the magic of Britain's folk traditions.

A Celebration of New East Anglian Writing

THU 12 FEBRUARY, 6PM, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING, £8
Join us for a celebratory evening showcasing the brilliant writers, books, publishers, and bookshops of the East of England. The event will culminate in the announcement of the East Anglian Book Awards Book of the Year 2025!

A partnership between the Eastern Daily Press and the National Centre for Writing, in association with the University of East Anglia

CITY OF LITERATURE CHRISTMAS MARKET

Saturday 22 November, 10am–4pm
National Centre for Writing, Dragon Hall
Free entry

Grab yourself (or a loved one!) the perfect literary gift courtesy of publishers, artists and makers of all kinds from across the region. Featuring books, zines, greeting cards, home décor, prints, and accessories.

Festive refreshments available.



N National Centre
for Writing



Norwich Science Festival at Dragon Hall

Step into a space where science meets creativity, and curiosity sparks new possibilities. We're excited to join the Festival in celebrating its tenth anniversary with a special series of events at Dragon Hall.



Time and Space: Writing Science Fiction with James McDermott

SAT 14 FEBRUARY, 2-4PM, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING, £16

Inspired by *Doctor Who*, this workshop with playwright, poet, and screenwriter James McDermott explores the craft of science fiction. Learn the tools and techniques to build worlds, structure plots, and bring characters to life. Suitable for adults only. Tickets on sale Thu 27 November.



Impossible Questions with Isabel Thomas

MON 16 FEBRUARY, 11AM, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING, £7 PER CHILD

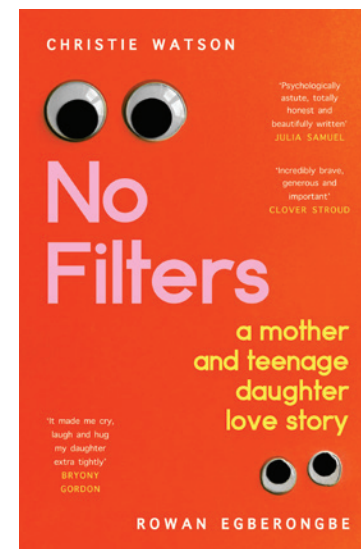
Why are bubbles always round? Could you ever touch a rainbow? Discover how the silliest questions spark the most brilliant science (and writing!) in this weird and wonderful event with Isabel Thomas. Isabel will share readings from her acclaimed book *The Bedtime Book of Impossible Questions* and invites you to bring your own curious questions to explore. Suitable for 7+ years.

Programmed by the National Centre for Writing

A Fear of Whistling: John Osborne

TUE 17 FEBRUARY, 7PM, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING, £12

After spending much of his life hating certain noises – whistling amongst them – writer John Osborne takes us on a deep dive into the world of misophonia, the extreme emotional response to everyday sounds. Blending humour with storytelling, this is an unmissable performance. Suitable for ages 12+. Tickets on sale Thu 27 November.



No Filters: Communication and Connection with Rowan Egberongbe & Christie Watson

WED 18 FEBRUARY, 7PM, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING, £12

How can we communicate when things are painful? In this candid and unique discussion based on their book *No Filters*, nurse-turned-bestselling-author Christie Watson and her daughter Rowan Egberongbe explore the challenges of talking about mental health across generations.

Programmed by the National Centre for Writing

Who Wants to Live Forever? With Hannah Thomas Uose & Simon Watt

THU 19 FEBRUARY, 7PM, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING, £12

What happens when a novelist and a biologist team up to tackle the question of immortality? Join speculative fiction author Hannah Thomas Uose (*Who Wants to Live Forever*) and biologist-writer Simon Watt for a mind-bending conversation that blurs the boundaries between fact and fiction. Together, they'll explore alternate realities, scientific possibilities, and how creative writing can help readers to connect with big ideas.

Co-programmed by the National Centre for Writing and Norwich Book Festival

Norwich Science Festival is presented by The Forum and a partnership of organisations and institutions including Norwich Research Park and the University of East Anglia



Meet the World

Meet the World is the home of NCW's work on the international stage. Rooted in Norwich UNESCO City of Literature but with a global reach, we are proud to collaborate with writers, translators, and organisations from all languages and cultures.



The Global Page

Online events celebrating the art of writing in all its forms, connecting brilliant minds across styles, languages, and cultures.



Erica Hesketh

KANATA: New Voices from Japan

TUE 14 OCTOBER, 7PM BST, ONLINE, FREE

Join us to celebrate the publication of the new series of Japanese chapbooks from Strangers Press. We'll introduce you to three new and exciting voices from Japan and will invite you to take a step beyond the stories to meet the translators behind their journey into English. Featuring Daniel Joseph, Jesse Kirkwood and Yuki Tejima in conversation with Erica Hesketh.

Published by Strangers Press in partnership with the University of East Anglia, the Norwich University of the Arts, the National Centre for Writing and GRRR Design, generously funded by the Yanai Initiative

Translation Odysseys: Life as a Literary Translator

TUE 4 NOVEMBER, 7PM GMT, ONLINE, FREE

Literary translators Yarri Kamara, Elena Pala, and Shaun Whiteside share their journeys working between Italian and English, discussing what drew them to the profession, the support currently available, and the changes they hope to see in the future.

In partnership with the British Centre for Literary Translation and the Italian Cultural Institute



Choo Yi Feng

Meet our residents

Meet our artists-in-residence at the National Centre for Writing, staying with us between October 2025 and February 2026.

Clara Chow works across genres of fiction, non-fiction and poetry. Her strange experiments under Hermit Press includes the prose chapbook *The Melancholy of Broken Bollards*. She has held residencies at the University of Iowa, Toji Cultural Center, ASEAN Literary Festival, and Shanghai Writers' Programme. Her residency is supported by NAC Singapore.

Choo Yi Feng is an intertidal explorer, climate activist, ecologist and fiction writer. His debut short story collection is *The Waiting Room*, and his work has appeared in *Foglifter Journal*, *Anathema*, *Queer Southeast Asia*, and *Alluvium*. He was nominated for the Pushcart Prize in 2022. His residency is supported by NAC Singapore.

Choi Ji-in debuted in 2013 with the Literature of the World New Writers Award and has since won the Cho Young-kwan Literary Creation Fund and Shin Dong-yup Prize for Literature. His poetry collections include *I Slept Against the Wall*, *Working Working and Loving*, and *Am I Not Your Sin*, alongside the anthologies *I Couldn't Forget Even a Line of You* and *You Think About Beauty*. His residency is supported by ARKO.

For more information on our residencies, including upcoming opportunities, visit nationalcentreforwriting.org.uk/residencies.

Our separate ways

Liz Breslin

New Zealand writer-in-residence Liz Breslin invites us on a vivid, wandering journey through Norwich. In this extract, she reflects on her first NCW residency, undertaken virtually, and the experience of returning to the city in person this year.

This story starts in a haunted hotel room with blackened twelfth century beams jutting out over the bathtub. Of course there are ghosts in these walls. I am in Tombland, which, contrary to how it sounds, has nothing to do with buried bodies. Rather, in Old English, the word combined open ground and empty space.

This story started in a confined space, the thirteen inches of my laptop screen. In February 2021 I was a virtual resident of the National Centre for Writing in Norwich, peering at the city from the heights of the cathedral's peregrine webcam.



© ADOBE STOCK

IRL I arrive by car in July 2025, screaming slightly when I see a sign that says Unthank Road.

This story starts when I start crying. First at the peregrines and then when I visit with Dame Julian's story behind a heavy wooden door with blue writing on a white page stuck to the outside.

Please leave this door open

There is no full stop.

I am in Norwich, and I've given away my plans to explore by following research or a map, by any means other than asking. Than walking. Than starting.

This story starts in a jewellery shop buying a titanium necklace I will later lose, in Shako Mako Café (come in! come in!) checking poem book proofs, at Dragon Hall, dipping my head to mind the roof. Each time I start, I ask where next?

People point me to places. I stand on a wall above the market stalls, my phone camera held high as my hand will reach. I send the picture to a friend, tell them I am here.

Scan the QR code to continue reading.



N Norwich
Theatre
Royal

01603 630 000
norwichtheatre.org



Activities at Dragon Hall

Young people and families

Tiny Dragons: Early-Years Explorer Sessions

TUE 21 OCTOBER, TUE 25 NOVEMBER, TUE 16 DECEMBER, TUE 27 JANUARY, TUE 24 FEBRUARY, 10-11.30AM, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING, FREE

A wonderful opportunity for young explorers to discover Dragon Hall through crafts, storytelling, and singing with guest creative facilitators. These monthly early-years sessions are designed for walking children up to four years old.

Made possible by the National Lottery Heritage Fund

Donuts, Robots & Awesome Comics with Neill Cameron

MON 27 OCTOBER, 11AM, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING, £7 PER CHILD

A fun, interactive session all about storytelling, drawing, and unleashing your imagination! See p.5 for details. Perfect for 7+ years.

Part of Norwich Book Festival

Dragon Friends with The Wayward Adventurers Guild

MON 27 OCTOBER, 2-4PM, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING, PAY WHAT YOU WISH

Draw, collage and colour your own dragon, inspired by the architecture of Dragon Hall! Transform doorways into wings, windows into spikes, and old wallpaper patterns into scales. Learn how to create a mini book and fill it with stories about your dragon. Suitable for ages 8-10 years.

Made possible by the National Lottery Heritage Fund

Meet us at the Imaginarium! Norwich Book Festival

TUE 28 OCTOBER, 10AM-4PM, THE FORUM, FREE

We're taking part in Norwich Book Festival's celebration of creativity, stories and imagination by hosting family-friendly activities throughout the day. Come and say hello!

Part of Norwich Book Festival

Family Activity Day

WED 29 OCTOBER, 10AM-3PM, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING, FREE & DROP-IN

Step into Dragon Hall and discover 600 years of fascinating stories! Relax in the book nook, borrow an activity bag, or join creative activities led by artists. Bring your lunch and unwind in our garden – Dragon Hall is a place for everyone to enjoy!

Supported by the Norwich Freeman's Charity and OneStop Community Partnership Fund

Impossible Questions with Isabel Thomas

MON 16 FEBRUARY, 11AM, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING, £7 PER CHILD

Discover how the silliest questions spark the most brilliant science (and writing!) in this weird and wonderful event with science writer and author Isabel Thomas. See p.8 for details. Suitable for 7+ years.

Programmed by the National Centre for Writing for Norwich Science Festival

Family Activity Day

TUE 17 FEBRUARY, 10AM-3PM, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING, FREE & DROP-IN

Step into Dragon Hall and discover 600 years of fascinating stories! Relax in the book nook, borrow an activity bag, or join creative activities led by artists. Bring your lunch and unwind in our garden – Dragon Hall is a place for everyone to enjoy!

Supported by the Norwich Freeman's Charity and OneStop Community Partnership Fund



The Spectacular Suit at Dragon Hall

Step into Dragon Hall this autumn

Step into Dragon Hall, one of Norwich's most important medieval buildings and home to the National Centre for Writing.

Our unique city-centre venue is open weekly from **Sunday to Tuesday, 10am–3pm**, until Tuesday 21 October when we close for the winter. Pick up a trail map, explore the historic Great Hall, get creative in our arts-and-crafts activity space, or enjoy nature in our enclosed garden.

Entrance is free – no booking required.

National Centre for Writing, Dragon Hall, 115-123 King St,
Norwich, Norfolk NR1 1QE
01603 877177
nationalcentreforwriting.org.uk/visit



© HANNAH HUTCHINS

Discover the story of medieval Norwich

Dragon Hall is at the heart of Norwich's medieval history; a rare example of a merchant's trading complex with a hidden story which dates back to the Anglo-Saxon period. Pick up a map from our entrance or download our audio tour to begin your journey.

Find inspiration and get creative

There's plenty of inspiration to be found in our unique building, which welcomes writers and artists from all walks of life every day. Get involved with a workshop or activity session, make friends, and share your story — designed for adults and kids alike!

Family Activity Days

Drop into Dragon Hall and enjoy giant games, relax with a story in the book nook, pick up an activity bag, or join creative activities with artists. For dates, please refer to p.15.

Guided Heritage Tours

MON 20 OCTOBER, MON 17 NOVEMBER, MON 15 DECEMBER, MON 19 JANUARY, MON 16 FEBRUARY, 2PM, £5 SUGGESTED DONATION

Take a guided tour of Dragon Hall and learn more about its architectural and social history from an experienced volunteer guide. Please book in advance as spaces are limited.

Become a Dragon Hall Explorer!

Meet Dragon, our resident fire-breathing friend, who has made the Great Hall his Dragon's Lair. Embark on our trail and complete creative activities as you explore the building to earn your explorer stamp!

Relax and unwind

Join us for nature trails in the garden, poem writing, or light reading in the Gallery and Great Hall. The garden is also the perfect spot for you to bring your lunch, sit with a friend, or bathe in the autumn sunshine.

Drop-in and Write (ages 60+)

MON 10 NOVEMBER, MON 8 DECEMBER, MON 12 JANUARY, MON 9 FEBRUARY, 2-4PM, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING, FREE & DROP-IN

Join us in a quiet, supportive space, where you can start writing or continue existing projects, alongside like-minded people. A facilitator will be present to offer prompts and encouragement. Tea and coffee provided!

Supported by East of England Co-Op Community Cares Fund, The Linbury Trust, and Simon Gibson Charitable Trust

New! Dragon Hall audio tour

New for 2025! Uncover the story of Dragon Hall with our free audio tour. Simply scan the QR codes on your phone as you explore to reveal the building's rich history and the many roles it has played over time.

Ask a member of staff at the Dragon Hall box office for more information.



Visit the NCW shop at Dragon Hall

The newly refurbished entrance at Dragon Hall is now open, welcoming visitors as both a box office and shop for the National Centre for Writing and Dragon Hall. During your visit, browse our selection of notebooks, pens, books, prints, and tote bags – perfect for gifts or keepsakes.

Open weekly, Sunday to Tuesday, 10am–3pm.

CAN WE
STOP
KILLING
EACH
OTHER?

SAINSBURY CENTRE

Living Art Sharing Stories

20 September 2025 - 17 May 2026

This season of exhibitions explores *Can We Stop Killing Each Other?* How can art and creativity help us build compassion, understanding, dialogue and healing?

This season has been developed in consultation with partners to provide a sensitive presentation of artworks to foster empathy and understanding through ongoing compassionate dialogue.

sainsburycentre.ac.uk

Luca Giordano, *The Brazen Serpent*, c.1690, oil on canvas.
© Compton Verney, photography by Jamie Woodley

JOIN OUR WRITING COMMUNITY

nationalcentreforwriting.org.uk/academy

ACADEMY
at National Centre for Writing



Workshops

Try something new or sharpen your skills with an informal creative writing workshop.

What if...? Speculative Fiction with Alex Pheby

SAT 11 OCTOBER, 10AM–12.30PM, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING, £45 (£35 CONC)

Revitalise your writing with the limitless possibilities of speculative fiction. Ask yourself 'what if?', explore the consequences, and discover how easily you can craft bold, imaginative science fiction and fantasy plots.

Words for Change: Crafting Stories that Inspire Action with Joycelyn Longdon

SAT 1 NOVEMBER, 2–4.30PM, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING, £45 (£35 CONC)

An inspiring workshop on how words can spark change and motivate readers to take positive action. Whether you write fiction or non-fiction, researcher and educator Joycelyn Longdon will provide the tools and guidance to help you connect with and empower your audience.

Editing 101 with Ayisha Malik

SAT 8 NOVEMBER, 2–5PM, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING, £45 (£35 CONC)

Discover key techniques for weaving together plot and character arcs to create a strong foundation for your story, then gain insider insights into the publishing industry.

Magic Systems: Writing Fantasy with Bea Fitzgerald

SAT 28 FEBRUARY, 2–4.30PM, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING, £45 (£35 CONC)

Bea Fitzgerald leads an immersive workshop on crafting compelling magic. Discover how to design systems that raise the stakes, captivate readers, and feel seamlessly woven into your fantastical worlds.

Exploding Archetypes with Rachel McCrum & Amélie Prévost

WED 18 MARCH, 6.30–9PM, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING, £45 (£35 CONC)

Explore what unfolds when you flip expectations of character, narrative, and process in this collaborative writing and spoken-word workshop. Whether you work in prose or poetry, this is a chance to break conventions and discover new creative possibilities.

Exploring Identity in Fiction with Nicolas Padamsee

SAT 28 MARCH, 10AM–12.30PM, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING, £45 (£35 CONC)

Explore the power of identity in a thought-provoking and morally nuanced way. Through a blend of group discussions and guided writing exercises, we'll examine character, plot, setting, and style to help you bring your stories to life.

Join us for a day of writing workshops led by independent publisher Story Machine Books!

Out of Time: Anachronism in Historical Fiction

SAT 15 NOVEMBER, 10.30AM–12NOON, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING, £20 (£15 CONC)

Explore how anachronism can elevate your storytelling, and experiment with historical events, people, and even language in unexpected ways.

Writing Place and Setting in Crime Fiction

SAT 15 NOVEMBER, 10.30AM–12NOON, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING, £20 (£15 CONC)

Step into the shadows in this immersive workshop focused on crafting a vivid and atmospheric sense of place and setting in your crime fiction.

Who am I, Speaking in the Dark?: Voice in Poetry

SAT 15 NOVEMBER, 1–2.30PM, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING, £20 (£15 CONC)

Spend an afternoon exploring the many voices that can speak through a poem – from your own voice to the voices of narrators, objects, and even the places around you.

Writing the Future in Speculative Fiction

SAT 15 NOVEMBER, 1–2.30PM, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING, £20 (£15 CONC)

Discover how speculative fiction can challenge the present and expand what's possible in the future.

Evening courses

Weekly in-person sessions designed for you to practise skills and workshop ideas.

Writing From the Archives with Elizabeth Lewis Williams

TUE 14 OCTOBER FOR SIX WEEKS, 7-9PM, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING, £180 (£150 CONC)

This short course invites writers of all genres to discover the rich world of archives. Explore how archival materials can spark ideas, shape narratives, and bring authenticity to your writing. No prior experience needed!

Captivating Crime Fiction with Elizabeth Haynes

THU 16 OCTOBER FOR SIX WEEKS, 7-9PM, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING, £180 (£150 CONC)

Dive into the dark heart of crime fiction and uncover what makes the genre so irresistibly gripping. This course will guide you through crafting edge-of-your-seat suspense, morally complex characters, and unforgettable plots that keep readers hooked until the very last page.

The Fundamentals of Fiction with Ian Nettleton

MON 23 FEBRUARY, 7-9PM FOR TEN WEEKS, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING, £250 (£225 CONC)

This supportive and engaging course explores the evolution of the short story – from its origins to contemporary techniques – while helping you build confidence, develop your craft, and establish a regular writing routine.

Developing Your Prose Fiction with Ian Nettleton

TUE 24 FEBRUARY, 7-9PM FOR TEN WEEKS, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING, £250 (£225 CONC)

Designed for writers with some experience or those already working on a project. Focus on refining the core elements of fiction, developing compelling and morally complex characters, and placing them in engaging situations. You'll also gain practical editing techniques.



©LUKE WITCOMB

The Writing Life: 30-Day Challenge

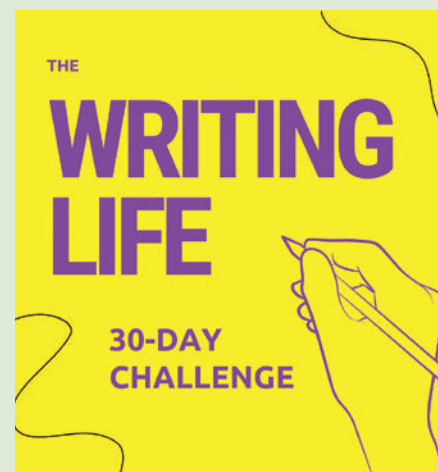
SAT 1 NOVEMBER & THU 1 JANUARY, ONLINE, £30

Looking for a quick boost to jumpstart your creative practice or build a consistent writing routine? Want to try something new? Whether you're writing for the first time or breaking old habits, our 30-day writing challenge is the perfect companion to help you achieve your writing goals.

Each day, you'll receive a fresh, original prompt or exercise directly to your inbox. Just set aside 15 minutes to develop new skills, and cultivate a healthy, inspiring, and accountable writing habit.

As a bonus, our Head of Programme, Holly Ainley, will pop up throughout to offer encouragement and motivation to keep you inspired along the way.

Take part online from anywhere, at any time that suits you. Once purchased, it's yours to keep forever!



Browse our growing library of free writing resource packs

Our online resource packs offer practical advice, techniques, and inspiration for writers just starting out (or for those keen to refine their craft). While the focus is on fiction, the insights are valuable for all forms of writing.

Each pack features articles, podcasts, and videos featuring acclaimed authors. Covering everything from Beginnings and Method to Character, Research, Routine, and Editing, this growing library is designed to help you develop your voice and strengthen your practice.

NEW for October!

Dare to frighten your readers this autumn! From timeless traditions to the unconventional and downright strange, our new Horror pack is filled with insights and inspiration from Irenosen Okojie, Zoë Apostolides, Julia Armfield, Adam Z. Robinson, and more.

Explore the collection:
nationalcentreforwriting.org.uk/academy/eca-packs

Online tutored courses

Join a global writing community and receive personalised feedback on your work with our flexible creative writing courses.

Designed for writers of all levels, our practical online courses feature engaging exercises, interactive Zoom sessions, curated resources, and fortnightly tutor feedback to help you refine your craft or embark on your writing journey.

Courses designed in partnership with the University of East Anglia



How to Write Fiction (12-week course)

BEGINS MON 23 FEBRUARY, £495

Master the essential tools to craft compelling fiction, from creating memorable characters and building captivating plots to discovering and honing your unique voice. This course is perfect for anyone starting out as a novelist or short story writer, offering the foundation you need to bring your stories to life.



© ADOBE STOCK



Crime Writing

Creative Non-Fiction: An Introduction (12-week course)

BEGINS MON 23 FEBRUARY, £495

Explore various forms within the genre, including biography, reportage, nature writing, and more. Learn how to effectively research and convey information, structure engaging narratives, and express your unique perspective.

An Introduction to Crime Writing (12-week course)

BEGINS MON 23 FEBRUARY, £495

Explore the themes and enduring appeal of the UK's biggest-selling genre. Learn how to create credible worlds and characters, structure compelling stories, and build page-turning, tension-filled scenes.

An Introduction to Memoir (12-week course)

BEGINS MON 23 FEBRUARY, £495

Explore different forms of memoir, uncover your motivations for writing, and develop key techniques to strengthen your work. Learn how to craft a compelling life story while embracing vulnerability with confidence.

Develop Your Fiction (18-week course)

BEGINS MON 23 FEBRUARY, £995

This intensive course deepens your fiction skills, guiding you through more sophisticated techniques and diverse approaches to storytelling. You'll experiment creatively, read widely, and emerge with a polished draft of a short story.

The Art of Noticing: Nature Writing (eight-week course)

BEGINS MON 23 MARCH, £300

Discover the art of writing about nature and the environment, mastering techniques to bring the natural world vividly to life. Learn to conduct field research and receive personalised feedback, empowering you to confidently create rich, immersive worlds in your work.

How to Write a Novel

BEGINS MON 23 MARCH, £300

If you've been dreaming of writing a novel, this course could be the motivation and structure you need to finally get started. Over eight weeks, you'll explore practical techniques for long-form storytelling through a rewarding mix of expert guidance, engaging writing exercises, and supportive feedback.



Online, self-paced courses

These short online courses can be completed at your own pace, and once purchased, they're yours to keep. Explore writing habits and routines, build confidence, develop character and plot, or experiment with a new genre.

The Writer's Refresh with Julia Bird

This self-paced course with Julia Bird invites you to move beyond the mechanics of craft and reimagine your writing practice as a lifestyle that is sustainable, connected, focused, and energising. Whatever form your writing takes, and whatever your level of experience, Julia will guide you in sparking new ideas, connecting with readers and collaborators, and building a fulfilling, productive writing practice.

NEW!

Craft

- How to Write Real People in Memoir
- How to Write True Crime
- New Ways with Short Form Poetry
- How to Write Unreliable Narrators
- How to Write Young Adult Fiction
- Writing Characters for Middle-Grade Fiction
- How to Create Suspense in Fiction
- Writing Science Fiction

Professional insights

- How to Make Money From Your Writing

Confidence & productivity

- How to Write More and Stay Happy
- How to be a Confident Poet
- Supercharge Your Writing

Many of our courses are free!

The flesh and bones of historical writing

Imogen Hermes Gower, NCW tutor and author of *The Mermaid and Mrs Hancock*, shares her insights on writing historical fiction that feels vivid, authentic, and compelling.

In my experience, historical fiction comes down to the flesh and the bones. You tend to start with one or the other.

Bones

That is, *the events*. The character, date, inciting incident; the payoff. This makes a lovely sturdy framework for a novel but it's bare and inert. Those bones need flesh. Add research, insight, and style: without these, your creature won't learn to breathe or move.

Flesh

Alternatively, you start with all the *flesh* – the wibbly squishy vibes-y stuff. You adore a specific era, place or historical figure. You long to communicate the riches of this capacious period world you've discovered... but right now you have no plot to hang it on. It's just a big soft blob.

The soft stuff and the bony stuff need one another. Craft is what brings them together. Your plot and structure are there to draw the reader's eye and help navigate the world of the past. That soft squishy content must be paced and curated and sometimes ruthlessly culled (sorry!), but it's no less important.

Stories aren't discrete from their context. Convincing characters are products of time and place. So, while your plot showcases the bits of the past you love best, the past must infuse its sensibilities, facilitate its dialogues, and inform what is practically possible.

Scan the QR code to continue reading.



Imogen Hermes Gower

One-to-one mentoring

Looking for advice? Need feedback on your writing? Our expert mentors are uniquely placed to help writers of all levels, from the finer details of a specific project to the bigger picture of your life as a writer. Working one-to-one, each session is focused on how best to help you, wherever you are in your writing journey.



Julia Bird

Single or introductory mentoring session

£95 FOR A ONE-HOUR SESSION

Try mentoring for the first time and get a taster of what the relationship can offer. Also useful if you have a particular challenge or area of advice you would like to address.

The Full Story: 12-month mentoring package for prose writers
£3,000 (PAYMENT PLANS AVAILABLE)
 Guided by Megan Bradbury, you will grow a long-form prose project from its conception to its completion. Megan's teaching is process-led and uniquely tailored to each writer. You will receive feedback on up to 60,000 words of writing.

Aspire: mentoring package (three session minimum)

FROM £256.50

Sign up for a bespoke package of support and meet regularly with your mentor to refine your manuscript, work on a funding application or implement an action plan to improve your creative practice – whatever it is that will help you to achieve your writing goals.

Book three or more sessions in one transaction with the same mentor and receive a 10% discount on your total purchase.

NORWICH BOOK FESTIVAL

24–31 October 2025

**THE CELEBRATION
OF STORIES IS BACK**

norwichbookfestival.co.uk

Presented by

the
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Key partners

Norfolk
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UEA
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for Writing

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LIVE



BOOK NOW



Wed 5 Nov
6:30pm
UEA

NUSSAIBAH YOUNIS

Dr Nussaibah Younis is a peacebuilding practitioner and a globally recognised expert on contemporary Iraq. Shortlisted for the Women's Prize for Fiction 2025, Younis' debut novel *Fundamentally* is a biting original, wildly funny and razor-sharp exploration of love, family, religion and the decisions we make in pursuit of belonging.

'A NEW NAME TO WATCH OUT FOR' THE TIMES
'THE DEBUT OF THE YEAR' STYLIST
'ELECTRIC' GUARDIAN

Book your tickets and find out more about the UEA Live Autumn 2025 programme at www.uealive.com



@UEALitFest

Support for writers

How to connect, get involved, and access support for your creative projects this autumn and winter.

Resources & advice

Writing Hub

Our free online collection explores the craft of writing, creative ideas, and showcases new work. Whether you're looking for in-depth articles on writing techniques, podcast interviews with emerging and established authors, reading recommendations, or insights into the future of writing, our digital library offers a wealth of content to read, listen to, and watch.

Explore now at nationalcentreforwriting.org.uk/writing-hub.

The Writers' Room at Dragon Hall

Your place to write in Norwich! The Writers' Room offers free, bookable desk space on Thursdays and Fridays each week, providing a retreat in the city for use by writers, artists and creatives. Facilities include free WiFi and access to the garden. Please book your desk in advance.

To book your spot, visit nationalcentreforwriting.org.uk/writers-room.

The

Writing Hub

Explore our online library, where words, ideas, and creativity come to life.

Whether you're seeking essays on the art of writing, conversations with celebrated authors, or tips and advice on your writing craft, our ever-growing collection is yours to read, listen to, and watch.

Visit nationalcentreforwriting.org.uk/writing-hub

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for Writing



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Dragon Hall Cottage

Opportunities

City of Literature residencies & retreats

NCW hosts a year-round residency and retreat programme for UK and international writers and translators; a mix of in-person opportunities in the Dragon Hall Cottage and virtual residencies. We collaborate with a variety of partners and funders to support our residencies and exchanges, while also promoting international residencies from sister Cities of Literature around the world.

For the latest opportunities, visit nationalcentreforwriting.org.uk/residencies.

Dragon Hall Retreats

A retreat at the Dragon Hall Cottage in the centre of Norwich is an investment in your writing and an opportunity to get away from everyday life. We welcome applications for 2026 for single or joint retreats from anyone interested in creative writing or literary translation.

To find out more, visit nationalcentreforwriting.org.uk/dragon-hall-retreats.

TLC Free Reads

Looking for expert feedback on your manuscript? Each year, we partner with The Literary Consultancy (TLC), supported by Arts Council England, to offer up to 10 writers free access to TLC's renowned manuscript assessment service.

If you are a low-income writer living in Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Norfolk, or Suffolk, you may be eligible. The scheme gives priority to writers from under-represented backgrounds, including women, Black, Asian and minority ethnic writers, disabled writers, LGBTQ+ writers, and others whose voices are less often heard.

Applications will open on Monday 17 November 2025 until Monday 12 January 2026.

To apply, visit nationalcentreforwriting.org.uk/free-reads.



Escalator New Writing Fellows 2023/24
and their mentors; a flagship
opportunity for unpublished talent

Memberships

A great way to meet writers, translators, creatives and fellow word lovers.

NCW Society

For as little as a few pounds per month, enjoy exclusive newsletters, priority booking for events, special offers from NCW and our partners, and much more!

Supporters' Circle

Join our most dedicated supporters who help ensure the writers of tomorrow can thrive today. With transformative pledges starting from £31 per month, you'll receive all the benefits of NCW Society, plus exclusive access to invite-only events.

Fundraising events

A new series of events for friends, writers and our wider community raising funds for Dragon Hall and National Centre for Writing.

Shop & merchandise

Each purchase from our shop supports our work and the upkeep of our heritage building. Open at Dragon Hall for selected events, and to drop-in between Sunday and Tuesday, 10am–3pm, until Tue 21 October.

Visit nationalcentreforwriting.org.uk/shop.

Sponsorship & Partnerships

Brand association, advertising and sponsorship are unique opportunities to reach cultural audiences, creatives and residents in Norwich City of Literature, Norfolk and beyond.

To discuss further, email development@nationalcentreforwriting.org.uk.



Registered Charity 1110725

Support us

The National Centre for Writing is dedicated to inspiring creativity and fostering a love of creative writing and reading.

We bring culture, creativity, and opportunity to thousands of people, enriching lives today and paving the way for a brighter future.

Will you join us?

Each year, thanks to the generosity of our supporters, we are able to:

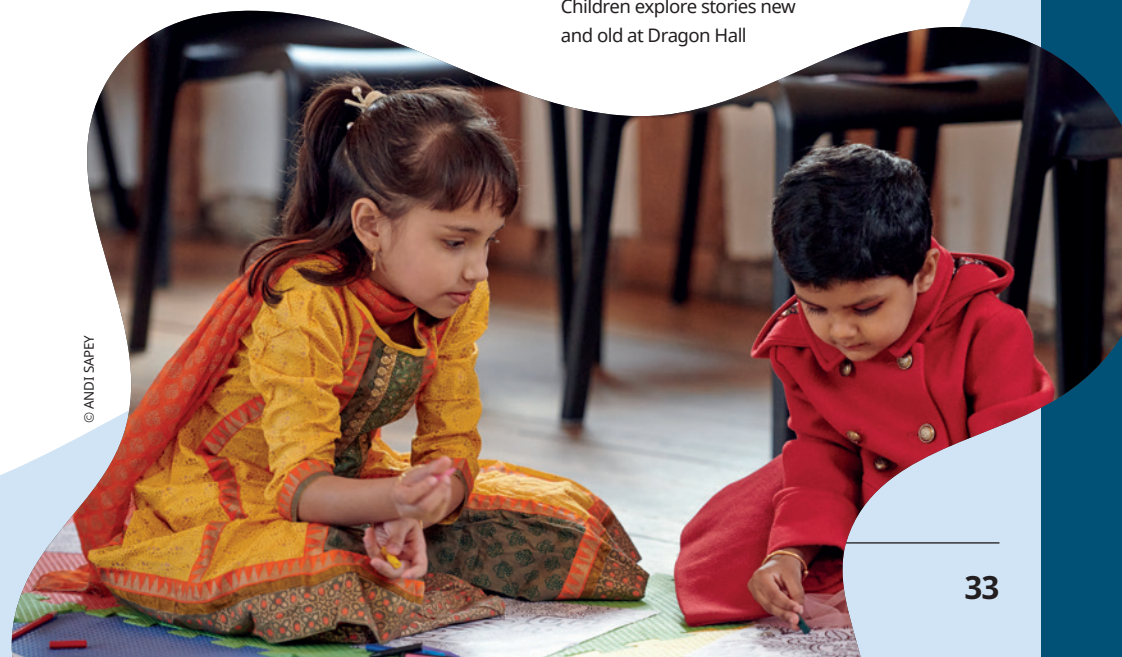
- Nurture emerging voices and stories, providing opportunities for **350+ creative writers & translators** through awards, residencies and more.
- Empower people of all ages to express themselves through words, reaching

more than **8,000 adults and 2,000 young people**.

- **Host over 120 dynamic events**, featuring diverse and inspiring writers who ignite imagination and conversation.
- **Collaborate with a wide range of partners**, from schools and universities to libraries and charities, supporting the elderly, refugees, and communities in need.

To make a donation, visit nationalcentreforwriting.org.uk/donate.

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Children explore stories new
and old at Dragon Hall

NORWICH

CITY OF
LITERATURE

Welcome to Norwich – a UNESCO City of Literature, that dares to dream. We are a city built on stories, filled with creative minds who believe that reading, writing and their lifelong benefits should be nurtured for everyone.

This autumn we turn the page on an ambitious new chapter as we launch the **Norwich UNESCO City of Literature Strategy 2025–2030**.

Led by the National Centre for Writing in conversation with Norwich City Council and a network of over 60 organisations and 150 individuals, we are united in championing Norwich as a globally recognised leader in literature, and in promoting reading and writing as fundamental forces for positive change in our communities.

Read on for what's on this season and how you can get involved with the city's buzzing creative scene. Whether you're a writer, creative, reader, event producer, librarian, bookseller, resident or curious visitor – we want you to get involved!

Find out more at nationalcentreforwriting.org.uk/norwich-unesco-city-of-literature.



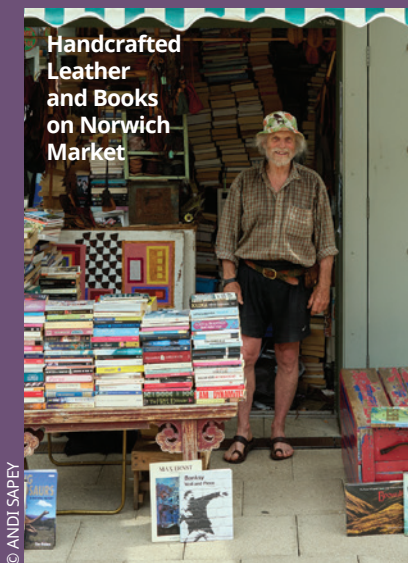
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Follow Norwich City of Literature on Instagram

Follow us on Instagram @norwichcityoflit for the latest on books, words and stories from our vibrant, creative city! Our feed is packed with opportunities, event highlights from Norwich and the wider region, personal stories from locals, and behind-the-scenes glimpses of the best spots to find inspiration, connection, and storytelling in the City of Stories.

Don't forget to tag us in your posts @norwichcityoflit and use the hashtag #NorwichCityOfLiterature. We want to share your fantastic work and the experiences you have!

Handcrafted
Leather
and Books
on Norwich
Market



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The W.G. Sebald Lecture 2025: Elif Shafak

MON 1 DECEMBER, 7PM, BRITISH LIBRARY & ONLINE, £15 (IN PERSON) / PAY WHAT YOU WISH (ONLINE)

The Sebald Lecture is given annually on an aspect of literature in translation. It's named after W.G. Sebald, who set up the British Centre for Literary Translation in 1989.

This year's lecture is given by the award-winning British-Turkish novelist and storyteller Elif Shafak. To book, visit events.bl.uk.

Presented by the BCLT in association with the British Library



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Elif Shafak

Sign-up to our newsletter

Published bimonthly, the Norwich City of Literature newsletter provides a vital snapshot of the latest news, opportunities, collaborations, events, and original creative writing from across the city. It's a go-to resource for creatives, residents, visitors, journalists, and sister Cities of Literature around the world.

This newsletter is a collaborative platform, showcasing the work and voices of UNESCO partners – organisations, libraries, schools, businesses, freelancers, and creatives who are passionate about Norwich and its story.

Subscribe now at nationalcentreforwriting.org.uk/ncol-newsletter.

Find out what's on

We've partnered with VisitNorwich to launch a curated City of Literature section on their What's On calendar, showcasing the city's vibrant literary events and activities. To find out more head to visitnorwich.co.uk/whats-on.

Are you hosting a book or writing-themed event in Norwich? If you'd like your event to be considered for the What's On calendar, simply complete the submission form at visitnorwich.co.uk/submit-an-event and select 'UNESCO City of Literature' as the category.



Become a City of Literature Ambassador

Do you host events, activities or create content that celebrates storytelling, writing or literature in the city? Join our Ambassador network! Community groups, organisations, businesses and individuals are an integral part of Norwich's cultural and creative ecosystem, and we want to collaborate with you to connect with Norwich's literary status and amplify your work.

To register for our free Ambassador Toolkit, visit nationalcentreforwriting.org.uk/norwich-unesco-city-of-literature/ambassador.



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Page Against the Machine

UEA Live returns this autumn!

Discover a vibrant season of stories, performances, and fresh voices alongside beloved favourites. Highlights include Paula Hawkins launching *The Blue Hour* at Norwich Book Festival, Michael Morpurgo with the Autumn Festival of Norfolk, and Nussaibah Younis, author of the Women's Prize-shortlisted *Fundamentally*. Enjoy a poetry double-bill with Joelle Taylor and James McDermott, and close the season with Naomi Booth and Katy Massey in conversation.

To book tickets, visit uealive.com.

HOLLIE McNISH

BRAND NEW BOOK TOUR!

OCT / NOV 2025

"WARM, RELATABLE, SMART AND FUNNY" — SOPHIE ELLIS-BEXTOR
 "LIKE PAM AYRES ON ACID" — LEMNI SISSAY
 "ONE OF THE BEST POETS WE HAVE" — MATT HAIG

A 'NORWICH ARTS CENTRE PRESENTS' EVENT
 AT EPIC STUDIOS

AGE GUIDANCE: 14+
 BOOK SIGNING AFTER THE EVENT + THE BOOK HIVE STALL

SUNDAY 26 OCTOBER 7.30PM

Book Hive
 Norwich Arts Centre
 epicstudios

Spotlight on... libraries & collections

Norwich's passion for cultural heritage and storytelling shines through its rich network of libraries, archives, and collections.

The city is home a network of public libraries, with the Millennium Library among the most visited in the country. It houses the Norfolk Heritage Centre, American Library, Norwich Millennium Zine Library, Norwich City Library, and the Colman's Collection.

The Sainsbury Institute for the Study of Japanese Arts and Cultures, together with the Lisa and Robert Sainsbury Collections at the Sainsbury Centre, present extraordinary

works spanning centuries. Norwich Cathedral Library adds to this heritage with rare texts dating back to the 15th century. At UEA, the library and its specialist collections include the British Archive for Contemporary Writing.

Scan the QR code to find out more.



Image: Sol Elibol



UEA Evening Language Programme

The UEA Evening Language Programme offers courses to the general public, taught to the highest standard by our experienced and friendly tutors.

Languages taught include **Arabic, BSL, Chinese, Dutch, French, German, Greek, Italian, Japanese, Russian, Spanish, Portuguese and Polish.**

Find out more at: www.uea.co/ulp

Got questions?
Email: ulp@uea.ac.uk



DRAGON HALL

Make history

Dragon Hall is a magnificent 15th-century timbered trading hall and courtyard garden in the heart of Norwich. Blending historic detail with sleek contemporary touches, it's the perfect creative canvas for weddings, parties, and important events that seek to do things a little differently.

Find out more at weddingsdragonhall.co.uk or contact Christina Gardener [hires@nationalcentreforwriting.org.uk](mailto: hires@nationalcentreforwriting.org.uk).

Home to the

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for Writing

Contact us

Online: nationalcentreforwriting.org.uk

Phone: 01603 877177

Email: info@nationalcentreforwriting.org.uk

Office hours are between 9am–5pm

Monday to Friday for queries

by telephone or email.

Visit Dragon Hall

National Centre for Writing, Dragon Hall,

115–123 King St, Norwich NR1 1QE

Open every week, Sunday to Tuesday,

10am–3pm, until 21 October.

Free, no booking required.

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N National Centre
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